

Mohawk Valley Library System
Board of Trustees Meeting
July 20, 2023

MINUTES

PRESENT: Rosemary Barger, Katherine Hawkins, Susan London, Joanne Mickle, Rebecca Sokol, Mary VanPatten (left early), Kim Zimmer, and Eric Trahan, Director.

EXCUSED: Mary Salluzzo, Haileab Samuel, Christine Witkowski, April Davies

GUESTS: Sharon O'Brien, Kate Clingan, Michele Largeteau (left after presenting), Beth Rienti, Charity Thorne, Mary Carrier (left early)

Call to Order President Mary Van Patten called the meeting to order at 9:32am.

Consideration of Minutes: Minutes from the May meeting were presented.

MOTION: To accept the minutes from the May 18, 2023 meeting as presented.
Hawkins/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

The **Director's Report** for May and June 2023 was distributed before the meeting. Eric wanted to update the Board on where MVLS stands with the goals that were set during our plan of service process:

1. **Empower Libraries with the Vision & Knowledge for Secure Futures** – Exciting things are happening in Amsterdam! They got a big increase with their last budget vote. They've already begun advertising for new staff positions and are looking to create a library foundation. Sharon Springs is preparing for a budget vote as well.
2. **Empower Libraries with the Skills, Tools, & Resources for Serving All** and 4. **Empower Libraries for Inspiration & Methods for Telling the Library Story** – Mary Carrier recently received a \$1500 Affordable Connectivity Program grant to help people who qualify for assistance with internet connectivity to learn about these programs. We are also getting involved with the New York State Connect All Initiative, which works to identify folks in areas with a lack of internet connectivity.
3. **Empower Libraries with Collaboration for Outstanding Library Services** – MVLS is currently working to revamp Central Library Aid for more collaborative projects.

Staff Updates Beth Rienti attended the board meeting to introduce herself to the board. She is our new Public Services Consultant. She's currently working on expanding our early literacy programs with community partners, as well as visiting as many of our libraries as she can. Lately she has been starting to look at services for seniors in the area and is hoping to get our libraries involved in the Great Give Back this year.

Michele Largeteau attended the meeting to brief the board on her role as Joint Automation

Project Manager. The Joint Automation Project is a collaboration between SALS and MVLS to share an Integrated Library System. To support the ILS, JA staff manages and helps to integrate their network. They also offer two group PC orders per year, which helps with computer pricing. JA then does all the configuration for the new computers. In addition to maintaining the ILS and providing network and PC support, JA provides email and OneDrive storage, as well as 24/7 phone and email support. JA requires all library and system staff to sign a security policy yearly, and this year have started requiring annual phishing trainings. JA also helps libraries with building projects as well as any technology consulting projects (for example, SCP is in the process of replacing their RFID hardware and JA is working with them for the setup, installation, and security).

The Joint Automation Council oversees the project, and Michele works with four dedicated IT staff: Jim Baker, Dave MacFarland, Chris Mundell, and Jason Thomson. Lately, JA has been working on assisting libraries with cyber security options and implementing multi-factor authentication.

After Michele's presentation, discussion ensued about advocacy strategies to increase the funds we get from the state budget, as well as what boards can do to make the library the center of the community. Kim suggests building community relationships to increase library use, for example working with schools and local businesses to get people into the library. She has worked with real estate agents in the past and it has been mutually beneficial for both the agents and the library.

At this point in the meeting (10:30am), Mary VanPatten had to leave.

Privilege of the Floor Becky reports that STJ got a grant from the Children's Aid Association and used it to make improvements to their outdoor area and garden. They also used their MVLS Summer Programming grant to implement a new summer reading program – Bee a Reader. They are putting together packets to give out about the importance of bees in our ecosystem with projects for adults and children to do together.

Katherine has concerns about the sign out front still saying Mohawk Valley Library Association. She thinks there should be more of an MVLS presence in the libraries. She would also like to see Freedom to Read and Librarian Rights statements displayed. Katherine asks what happens with the ideas that come up in our board meetings, and how she can follow up on some of them.

Becky says that on the STJ board, they have committees that develop plans for action and funding and then they bring it to the full board who votes on it. Eric mentions the space between ideas and directives – there are a lot of ideas brought up at board meetings, but very few directives. Most of the discussions are more like brainstorming, without much of a plan for further action. When there is a plan of action, MVLS staff takes steps to address that. For example, with the sign discussions last year, we ended up purchasing and installing a new sign on the building, as well as cleaning the standalone sign by the road. Eric says that some of the things mentioned aren't high on the priority list for MVLS/member libraries, but if they are important to the board, the board can push them up the priority list.

Joanne says that if we want to act on the ideas brought up in meetings, there needs to be a motion, not just discussion. Becky points out that if we're talking about putting up MVLS displays and such in member libraries, we'd need to get approval from those libraries/their boards. Sharon comments that a lot of the ideas that come up are really more local library actions, we can't really force our will onto members.

Rosemary says it's easy to come up with ideas for other people to do. Becky says maybe at the beginning of the meeting, the board should discuss their goals like Eric does in his Director's Report.

Directors Council Report Kim reports that the directors have been meeting regularly, and moving around to different libraries to increase participation in these meetings. Lately they have been talking about policies for programs, multi-factor authentication, and cyber security insurance. They've been talking with Sharon about Central Library Services money and how it's being spent. At their next meeting, she'll ask other directors if there are materials from MVLS that they have a need for. She mentions that the Spring Symposium was a great opportunity for directors/staff/boards to talk and maybe we should go back and take a look at what came out of that meeting.

Treasurer's Report Eric presented the statements of Financial Position and Payment Schedule for May and June 2023.

Statements of Financial Position:

MOTION: To accept for audit the Statements of Financial Position for May and June 2023.

Sokol/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

Payment Schedules:

MOTION: To approve Payment Schedules #5 for \$101,688.07 and #6 for \$130,019.07. Mickle/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AWARDS Eric sent out preliminary awards information to the committee. September 1st is the application deadline.

BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT Katherine would like the landscaper to look at the spot on the lawn where a truck ran over it.

LIBRARY SERVICES There have been a lot of construction grant applications. The committee will have some decisions to make since we won't have enough funding for everything.

JOINT AUTOMATION COUNCIL There are Budget Amendments for JA in the board packets. There were unforeseen expenses for cyber insurance, generator maintenance, and bank fees,

so these lines have been adjusted with offsetting adjustments to the professional fees and telephone lines.

MOTION: To approve the JA Budget Amendments.
Mickle/Barger. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

STATE AID AND BUDGET We have begun receiving our State Aid, so we will be doing budget amendments at the next meeting to reflect what we'll actually receive.

FOUNDATION UPDATE The Foundation received two applications for Advocacy grants. Amsterdam has requested \$2500 to assist them in forming a library foundation. Cobleskill applied for \$525 for help in developing branded library cards.

MOTION: To approve the advocacy grants for a total of \$3025
London/Sokol. Ayes – 5. Nays – None. Abstentions – 1 (Zimmer).

There are two Foundation board members whose terms are expiring.

MOTION: To appoint April Davies to a 3-year term on the Foundation Board.
Barger/Zimmer. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

MOTION: To appoint Paul O'Brien to a 3-year term on the Foundation Board.
Sokol/London. Ayes – All. Nays – None.

NEW BUSINESS

ANNUAL MEETING This year's Annual Meeting is set for October 4th in Canajoharie. We plan on running it in the same manner as last year's. Susan suggests that the posters be at least twice the size. She acknowledges that this would be an added expense, but found them to be hard to read from afar. Eric says the reason for the size was that we can print that size in-house.

POLICY UPDATE – LIBRARY COLLECTIONS POLICY Eric encourages the board to look at our Collections policies (which can be found at <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Library-Collections-Policies-1-14.pdf>). At our September meeting, we'll discuss changes to this policy.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35am.

Next Regular Board Meeting:
Thursday, September 21, 2023
MVLS Service Center